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ABSTRACT

In the San Jose/Evergreen Community College District, course and basic skills prerequisites have been established for all courses. Students who do not have a record of having completed these prerequisites cannot enroll unless they have been assessed by a counselor, have had their prerequisites verified in alternate ways, and have been granted override status for enrollment. In fall 1989, 16,267 overrides were granted based on completion of equivalent coursework, instructor evaluations, life experience, previous degrees, and other reasons. A study was conducted to compare the academic success of students who had completed all course and basic skills prerequisites with that of students who had enrolled on override status. Study findings included the following: (1) 67% of the students who had completed all course and basic skills prerequisites (N=32,248) received an A, B, C, or CR grade, compared to 59% of those who entered on override status; (2) 66% of those granted overrides on the basis of instructor evaluation received a C grade or higher, as did 65% of those with previous degrees, 65% of those with existing college transcripts, and 64% of those granted override based on life experience; (3) the greatest proportion of A and B grades were achieved by students with an override on the basis of previous degrees; (4) only 49% of the students who insisted upon taking a course above their assessment level received a C or better; and (5) overall, the counselors' successfully placed 57% of their students in spring 1988, 59% in fall 1988, 64% in spring 1989, and 59% in fall 1989. (WJT)

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COUNSELOR ASSESSMENT AND STUDENT SUCCESS

FOR FALL 1989

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Research Report #84

April 2, 1990

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ABSTRACT

Counselor Assessment and Student Success for Fall 1989

by Jon Alan Kangas, Ph.D.
San Jose/Evergreen Community College District (SJ/ECCD)
April 2, 1990

In 1985, all courses in the SJ/ECCD had course and basic skills prerequisites as appropriate. A computerized prerequisite checking system kept track of all students who met prerequisites and all override codes given by counselors.

The California Community College Matriculation Plan and Title 5 regulations state that multiple assessment measures are needed in the placement of students. Counselor assessment is considered an important part of this process. This research examines the questions: (1) Does counselor assessment relate to student success? and (2) Can feedback and experience increase counselor success rates?

The success rate of 67% for all students meeting both course and basic skills prerequisites (N = 32,248, excluding override codes) for Fall 1989 was tabulated, as was the success rate of 59% for students assessed by counselors (N = 16,267). Success was defined as receiving a grade of A, B, C, or CR.

Codes used included: PD = Previous degree; LX = Life experience; ET = Existing transcript; EC = Existing coursework; ES = Existing test score; IE = Instructor evaluation; OT = Old test score; SE = System error; SI = Student insistence; SO = Some other reason; SQ = Course to be taken in a sequence, and SW = Student word.

The results were as follows:

1. The most consistent predictor of course success over large numbers of students at 67% (N=32,248) was completion of course and basic skills prerequisites.

2. A most significant finding continues to be that counselor judgment, at its best, can relate to high success.

   The overall counselor success rate was 59%, down from 64% for Spring 1989, but still up from an original 57%.

   A 60% or higher success rate was achieved by 17 of 46 counselors (37%), down from 44% for Spring 1989.

   The computer success rate was down also, from 69% to 67%. Seven percent (7%) beat the computer for Spring 1989 and 15% for Fall 1989. The percent of counselors below 50% was static at 7% for Spring 1989 and 9% for Fall 1989.

3. Codes indicating the taking of courses in proper sequence (73%), instructor evaluation (66%), the use of previous degrees (65%) and existing college transcripts (65%), and life experience (64%) were the codes associated with high success.

4. The use of the student word (SW) override code resulted in a 57% success rate, down from 61% in Spring 1989.

5. When an SO (some other reason) code was used to substitute for a prerequisite, a 55% success rate resulted.

6. The greatest proportion of A and B grades was achieved by students with Previous Degrees (PD), at 48%; with Life Experience (LX), at 45%; and with Existing Transcripts (ET), at 40%. Students meeting all prerequisites achieved 33% A's and B's.

7. For students who insisted on taking a course (SI) above their assessment/prerequisite level, less than a 50% success rate (49%) resulted. Only 22% received an A or B grade and 31% withdrew from the class insisted upon.

Counselors who carefully follow prerequisites, use a careful evaluation of relevant life experience, rely on documented evidence of previous coursework, and make judicious use of instructor evaluations can achieve high levels of success for their students.

Inservice training by counselors who have high success rates for particular override codes will be used to help train other counselors. The hope is that focused feedback on counselor success by code will result in improved student success. Further research will evaluate the results.

COUNSELOR ASSESSMENT AND STUDENT SUCCESS FOR FALL 1989

by
Jon Alan Kangas, Ph.D.

I. BACKGROUND

A. In 1985, the San Jose/Evergreen Community College District began its Computerized Prerequisite Checking System. All courses in the district were given course and basic skills prerequisites appropriate to the course. Students who did not have a record of those prerequisites in the district's computer could see a counselor and have their prerequisites verified or established in alternative ways. Counselors gave override codes for a particular course to explain the way in which the prerequisite had been met.

B. All California Community Colleges have begun a mandated matriculation process which includes assessment, orientations, counseling, and follow-up of students. We have been advised to use multiple means of assessment in making placement decisions rather than relying on a single test score. Counselor evaluation and judgment have been suggested as important additions to the process of assessing and placing students.

C. The current research has looked at the 16,267 override codes given at San Jose City College and Evergreen Valley College during Fall 1989, the counselor who used the code, and the success of the student in the course for which he/she was given the code.

These success rates for counselors were compared to the success rates of all students district-wide who met prerequisites (N = 32,248, excluding students who received codes).

D. The goal of the project, now in its fourth semester, was to discern which override codes were associated with the highest and lowest success rates and to discover which counselors had strategies for the use of codes leading to the highest levels of student success. The counselors with high success rates will be asked to share their strategies during inservice training sessions with other counselors.

E. The definition of the override codes used was as follows:

EC Equivalent coursework completed within the District
EP Experimental purposes (research, etc.)
ER Discrepancy between computer/student (Error)
ES Existing test score, not in system
ET Equivalent work seen on transcript
IE Instructor evaluated student as eligible
LX Life experience meets prerequisites, typically judged by faculty
OT Other test, e.g., old Davis score or other test score that relates to our curriculum
PD Previous degree
SE System error. Student is OK/DP not OK
SI Student insisted on taking a course above his/her assessment/prerequisite level
SM Student OK. Course name was changed.

SO Some other reason. Reason noted on Program Planning form

SQ Sequence. A technical code needed to allow a student to enroll in a course in the Summer and the following course in the Fall, e.g., English one level below 1A followed by English 1A. The SQ is given to the second class in the sequence.

SW Student's word he/she meets prerequisite. Based typically on coursework at other colleges and high schools.

II. SUCCESS BY OVERRIDE CODE

A. Success for the purposes of this study was defined as a student's receiving a grade of A, B, C, or CR.

The success rate for all students in the district who met all their prerequisites (excluding those who were given override codes) was 67%, down from 69% for Spring 1989.

The success rate associated with the various override codes (N >10) ranged from lows of 46% for Existing Score and 49% for Student Insistence to highs of 65% for Instructor Evaluation and 73% for students taking two classes in a Sequence.

The following table and graph indicate the number and percentage of students who succeeded for each kind of override code given. The flat line across the graph indicates the success rate of 67% for students who met all prerequisites district-wide (excluding counselor overrides).

TABLE 1

SUCCESS RATE BY CODE FOR FALL 1989

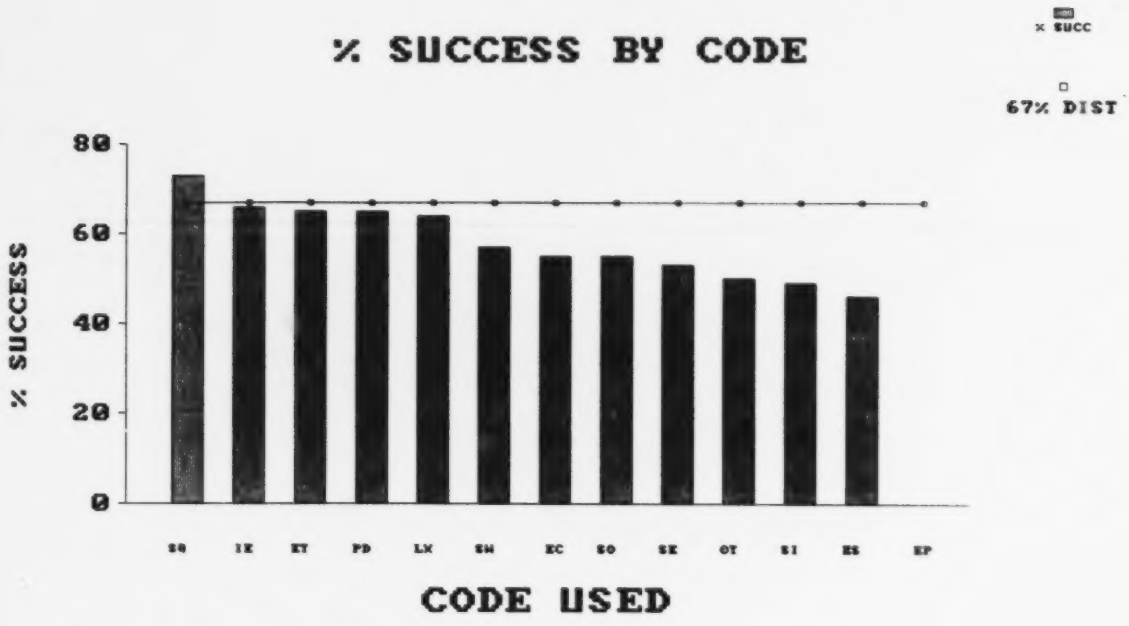
	A'S		B'S		C'S		D'S		CR'S		F'S		W'S		I'S		NC'S		TOTAL		SUCC*	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
EC :	245	14%	259	15%	268	15%	109	6%	188	11%	104	6%	430	25%	23	1%	105	6%	1731	100%	960	55%
EP :	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%
ER :	2	40%	0	0%	1	20%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	40%	0	0%	0	0%	5	100%	3	60%
ES :	19	8%	28	12%	31	13%	16	7%	32	13%	15	6%	82	34%	4	2%	12	5%	239	100%	110	46%
ET :	610	22%	469	17%	417	15%	113	4%	269	10%	138	5%	576	21%	37	1%	97	4%	2726	100%	1765	65%
IE :	470	17%	484	18%	341	13%	70	3%	482	18%	74	3%	531	20%	51	2%	195	7%	2698	100%	1777	66%
LX :	144	27%	93	18%	47	9%	18	3%	50	10%	25	5%	115	22%	17	3%	15	3%	524	100%	334	64%
OT :	1	17%	0	0%	0	0%	1	17%	2	33%	0	0%	1	17%	0	0%	1	17%	6	100%	3	50%
PD :	117	33%	52	15%	21	6%	4	1%	36	10%	10	3%	93	27%	5	1%	12	3%	350	100%	226	65%
SE :	1	3%	7	18%	5	13%	0	0%	8	20%	2	5%	15	38%	0	0%	2	5%	40	100%	21	53%
SI :	67	7%	133	14%	152	17%	67	7%	95	10%	79	9%	284	31%	12	1%	31	3%	920	100%	447	49%
SM :	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	100%	N/A	N/A
SO :	869	15%	886	15%	848	14%	304	5%	637	11%	332	6%	1582	27%	123	2%	282	5%	5863	100%	3240	55%
SQ :	9	16%	12	21%	9	16%	2	4%	11	20%	0	0%	10	18%	0	0%	3	5%	56	100%	41	73%
SW :	195	18%	185	17%	134	12%	45	4%	120	11%	64	6%	300	27%	24	2%	41	4%	1108	100%	634	57%
TOTAL	2749	17%	2608	16%	2274	14%	749	5%	1930	12%	843	5%	4022	25%	296	2%	796	5%	16267	100%	9561	59%
DIST PRQ MT+	8941	18%	7279	15%	5830	12%	1761	4%	9277	19%	1366	3%	10793	22%	614	1%	2654	5%	48515	100%	31327	65%
DIST PRQ MT-	6192	19%	4671	14%	3556	11%	1012	3%	7347	23%	523	2%	6771	21%	318	1%	1858	6%	32248	100%	21766	67%

*Succ = A + B + C + CR grades; the category of "no grades" was not included in the calculations

+Total of all students who met prerequisites district-wide. Includes all students who were given override codes by counselors.

-Total of all students who met prerequisites district-wide minus (-) those who had override codes.

GRAPH 1



B. Comments

1 CODE BEATS THE COMPUTER

Success Rate	Code	Comment
73%	SQ	This code was used, with a 73% success rate, up from 72%, to allow a student to take two courses in sequence when the first is a prerequisite for the second, e.g., English one level below 1A in Summer and English 1A in the Fall. Since these students plan ahead and are typically motivated to take the prerequisite class in summer, they may succeed at a higher rate (73%) than that of all students meeting prerequisites, at 67%.

4 CODES WERE AT 60% OR HIGHER

Success Rate	Code	Comment
66%	IE	Success associated with instructor evaluation, typically in the ESL and English areas, was down from 71% for Spring 1989 to 66%.
65%	ET	Counselors are doing an excellent job of evaluating transcripts from other colleges to establish that students have met District prerequisites. This was down, however, from 75% for Spring 1989.
65%	PD	65% (up from 64%) of students with previous degrees succeeded at their coursework.
64%	LX	The overall success rate of 64% for the Life Experience code was up from 60% for Spring of 1989. This assessment was often done by faculty in areas such as electronics, laser, computer technology, and math, as well as by faculty and counselors in other areas, such as ESL. Previous work experience related to a given course seems to be a good predictor of success. Over time, this method of assessment is second only to the computer in success rate.

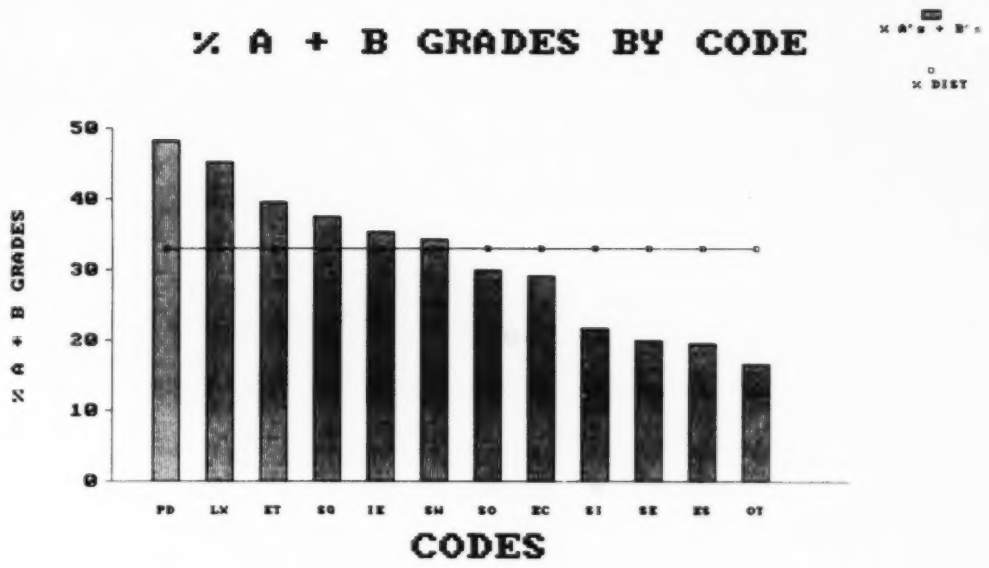
2 CODES WERE BELOW 50%

Success Rate	Code	Comment
49%	SI	Students insisting on taking courses above their prerequisite level had less than a 50% chance of succeeding.
46%	ES	This group of 239 students, if coded properly, should be students with proper test scores whose results were not in the computer at the time they were counseled. A more in-depth analysis is needed for these students, asking: Did they have proper scores, what test did they take, who are they?

III. A AND B GRADES BY OVERRIDE CODE

A. Students who enter a course with an override code often want to be able to achieve top grades. The following graphs, using data from Table 1, indicate the percentage of A and B grades received for each override code, excluding EP. The flat line indicates that 33% of students who met all course and basic skills prerequisites had A or B grades.

GRAPH 2



B. Comments

3 CODES WERE ASSOCIATED WITH HIGH PROPORTIONS OF A'S AND B'S

Code	% A + B
Previous Degrees (PD)	48%
Life Experience (LX)	45%
Existing Transcripts (ET) verifying coursework	40%

Students with previous documented coursework had the highest proportions of A's and B's.

3 CODES WITH N>10 WERE ASSOCIATED WITH A LOW PROPORTION OF A'S AND B'S

Code	% A + B
System Error (SE)	20%
Existing Test Score (ES)	20%
Student Insistence (SI)	22%

System Error. Most students who are placed in courses because of a perceived system error, in fact, do not meet the prerequisite for the course and have a low percentage of A's and B's.

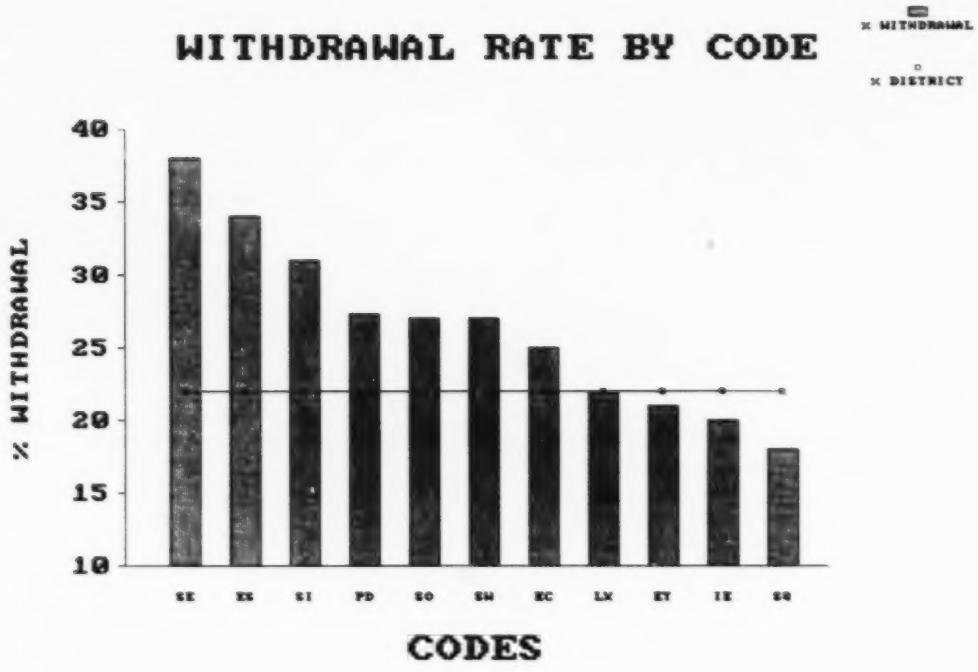
Existing Test Score. As previously noted, a more in-depth look at these students is needed to determine "who they are."

Student Insistence. Only 22% of students who insisted on taking a course above their prerequisite level achieved A's and B's. It is a common myth that SI students are more motivated and assertive than other students and that this will result in their success in classes. This research over four semesters has not borne this out.

IV. WITHDRAWAL RATE BY CODE

A. Some codes result in a much greater withdrawal rate than others.

GRAPH 3



B. Comments

3 CODES WERE ASSOCIATED WITH A LOWER WITHDRAWAL RATE COMPARED WITH THE 22% FOR ALL DISTRICT STUDENTS MEETING PREREQUISITES

Code	Withdrawal Rate
Existing Transcript (ET)	21%
Instructor Evaluation (IE)	20%
Sequence (SQ)	18%

Existing Transcript. These students tend to be organized enough to bring transcripts from another school indicating they have a prerequisite class.

Instructor Evaluation. It may be that the personal knowledge and attention of instructors relates to low withdrawal rates.

Sequence. SQ students have a clear sequence of courses planned. Clear plans and goals may result in the low withdrawal rate.

3 CODES WERE ASSOCIATED WITH HIGH WITHDRAWAL RATES COMPARED WITH THE DISTRICT'S 22% FOR STUDENTS MEETING PREREQUISITES

Code	Withdrawal Rate
System Error (SE)	38%
Existing Test Score (ES)	34%
Student Insistence (SI)	31%

System Error. Again, these students are students who have not met a prerequisite. The SE was typically given in error.

Existing Test Score. Again, this group is not doing well. A more in-depth look is needed to see who they are.

Student Insistence. These students do not meet the prerequisite for their classes to begin with. It could be inferred that they discover that they are not properly prepared and withdraw.

V. SUCCESS RATES BY OVERRIDE CODE AND BY COUNSELOR

A. Table 2 indicates the percentage of students succeeding for each override code and for each counselor (C1 = Counselor #1, C3 = Counselor #3, etc.). Only counselors who used more than 10 codes of any one code are included. The asterisk (*) indicates that the counselor did not use that code more than 10 times.

TABLE 2
SUCCESS RATE BY COUNSELOR AND CODE

Counselor

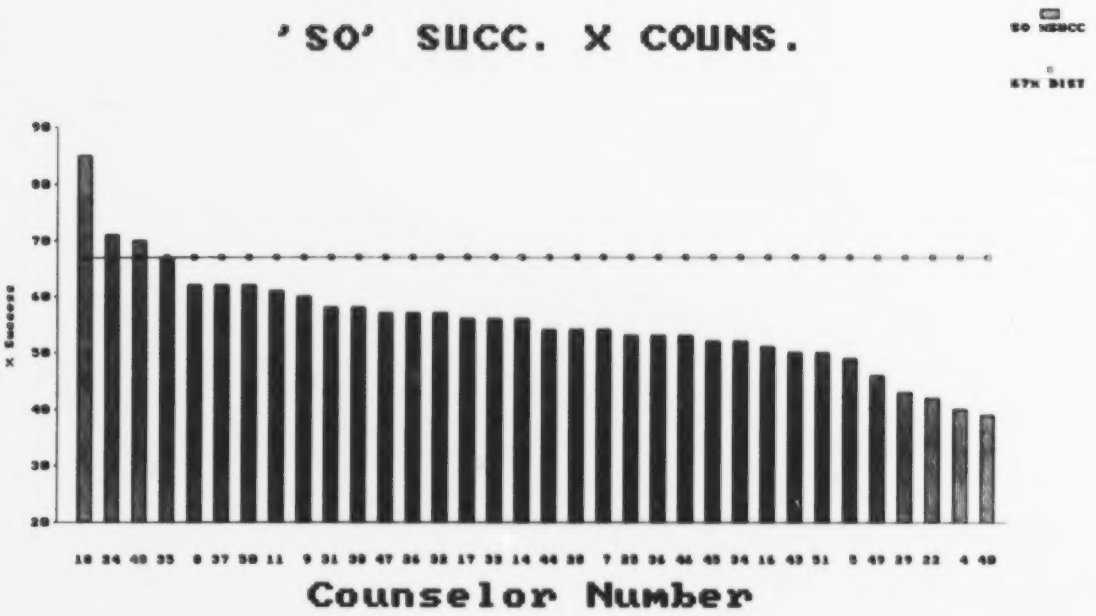
Code	C1	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	C11	C12	C14	C16	C17	C18	C19	C20	C22	C23	C24	C25	C26	C28
EC :	*	*	54%	*	*	43%	*	43%	38%	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	50%	*	77%	44%	58%
EP :	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
ER :	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
ES :	*	*	*	*	*	*	38%	53%	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
ET :	*	*	58%	57%	94%	*	68%	52%	*	51%	*	62%	51%	*	*	69%	*	43%	*	65%	69%	70%
IE :	88%	64%	67%	53%	*	73%	55%	83%	50%	*	*	79%	56%	*	51%	*	*	73%	*	63%	55%	60%
LX :	*	*	64%	51%	*	*	*	74%	*	*	*	*	71%	*	*	*	*	70%	*	*	*	77%
OT :	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
PD :	*	*	*	61%	*	*	72%	89%	67%	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	65%	*	*	*	*
SE :	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
SI :	*	*	55%	39%	*	58%	50%	63%	19%	55%	*	43%	37%	*	*	*	*	47%	*	46%	30%	*
SM :	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
SO :	*	*	40%	49%	*	54%	62%	60%	61%	*	56%	51%	56%	85%	*	*	42%	*	71%	53%	57%	54%
SQ :	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
SW :	*	*	43%	55%	*	71%	49%	53%	65%	*	*	53%	*	49%	*	*	38%	*	*	*	63%	84%
T	83%	64%	56%	52%	90%	57%	59%	69%	49%	51%	55%	57%	55%	62%	50%	65%	55%	52%	75%	57%	59%	60%

Counselor

Code	C29	C31	C32	C33	C34	C35	C36	C37	C38	C40	C42	C43	C44	C45	C46	C47	C48	C49	C50	C51	C52
EC :	48%	78%	65%	*	56%	57%	73%	62%	59%	*	*	*	*	57%	*	*	54%	67%	*	*	*
EP :	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
ER :	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
ES :	*	*	*	*	43%	69%	*	61%	50%	*	*	*	*	*	*	27%	*	*	*	*	*
ET :	*	*	59%	73%	57%	70%	61%	69%	64%	*	96%	74%	45%	*	75%	56%	65%	58%	80%	63%	*
IE :	79%	*	64%	58%	69%	55%	62%	74%	51%	*	*	53%	63%	61%	58%	75%	*	67%	*	43%	61%
LX :	*	*	46%	*	*	*	70%	*	66%	*	*	*	82%	54%	*	52%	*	18%	*	*	*
OT :	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
PD :	*	*	*	*	*	*	70%	50%	65%	60%	*	*	*	59%	*	67%	*	*	*	62%	*
SE :	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	47%	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
SI :	*	*	43%	60%	48%	39%	41%	50%	48%	*	*	45%	46%	67%	*	54%	*	*	*	*	64%
SM :	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
SO :	43%	58%	57%	56%	52%	67%	53%	62%	58%	39%	*	50%	54%	52%	53%	57%	70%	46%	62%	50%	*
SQ :	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
SW :	*	*	57%	63%	64%	65%	58%	*	62%	53%	*	42%	33%	*	*	60%	*	*	51%	*	*
T	54%	59%	55%	62%	55%	59%	57%	63%	60%	48%	95%	54%	53%	57%	56%	57%	63%	54%	63%	49%	62%

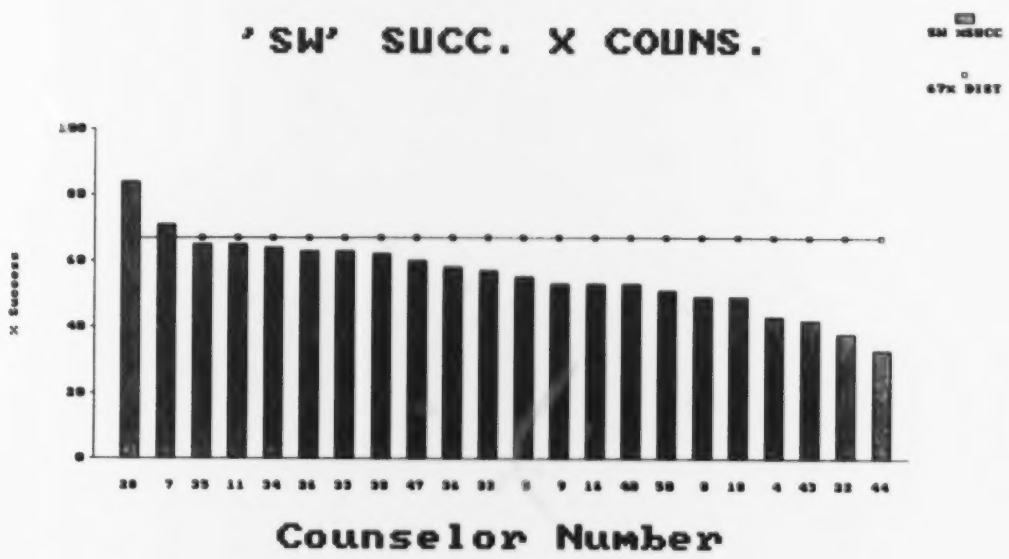
B. Graph 4 plots the success rates for students receiving 'SO' codes, broken down by counselor. Counselors who did not use the code more than 10 times were not included.

GRAPH 4



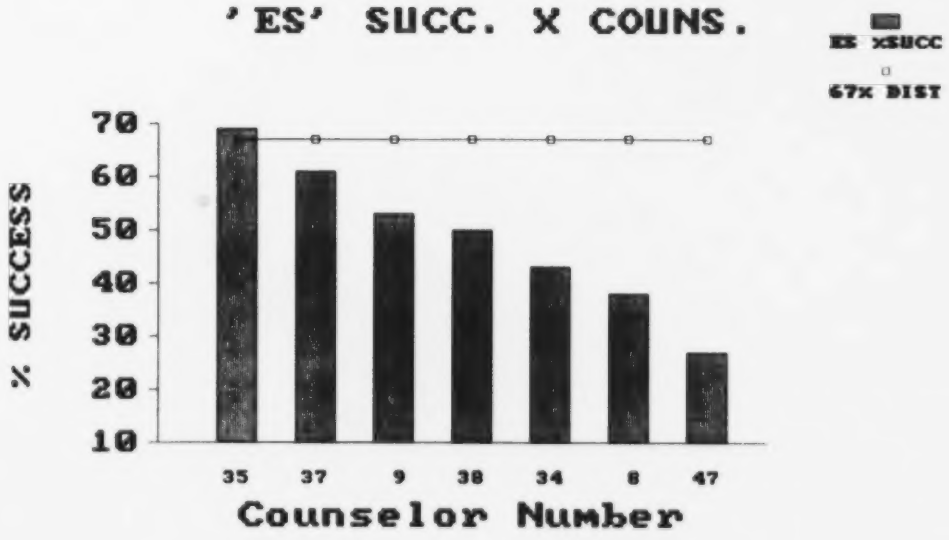
C. Graph 5 plots the success rates for students receiving '<u>SW</u>' codes, broken down <u>by counselor</u>. Counselors who did not use the code more than 10 times were not included.

GRAPH 5



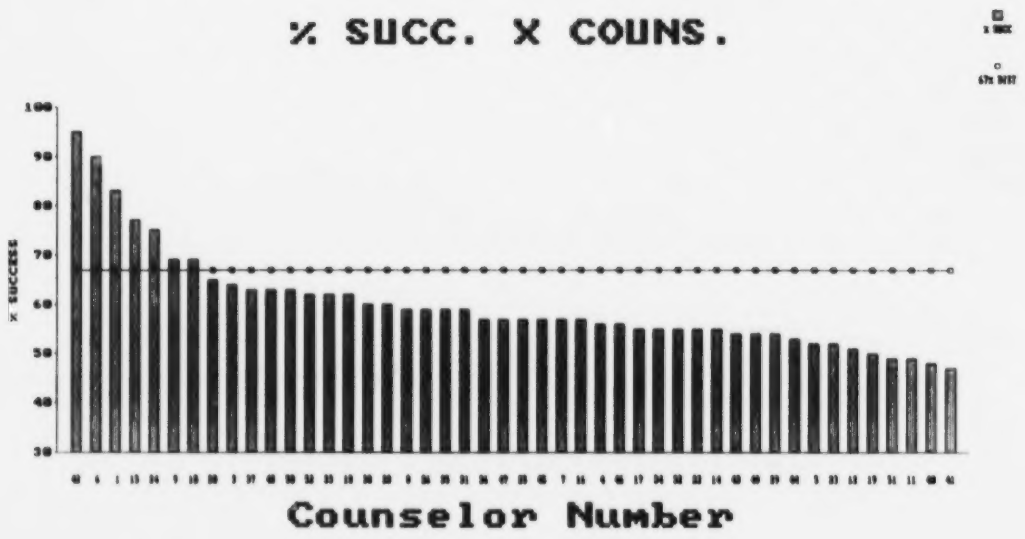
D. Graph 6 plots the success rates for students receiving 'ES' codes, broken down by counselor. Counselors who did not use the code more than 10 times were not included.

GRAPH 6



E. Graph 7 plots the overall success rates for students receiving override codes, broken down by counselor. Counselors who did not use codes more than 10 times were not included.

GRAPH 7



F. Comments on counselor success rates for particular codes

ES Code: The range of success for counselors using ES (an existing test score was seen that should allow the student to qualify for the course) was from 27% to 69%, the same as Spring 1989.

---One counselor, at 69%, achieved a higher success rate than the 67% rate for students meeting all prerequisites.

---Two of seven counselors (29%) achieved a rate at or above 60%, higher than the 10% for Spring 1989.

---Three of seven counselors (43%) achieved a rate below 50%.

The use of this code relies on a solid knowledge of prerequisites and a solid interpretation of test scores. It has historically had the greatest confusion of any code used and continues to be a problem area. A more in-depth analysis in the use of this code is needed.

SO Code: The success for counselors using the SO code (the student meets a prerequisite for some other reason) ranged from 39% to 85%, down from the 41% to 92% associated with Spring 1989.

---Three of 34 counselors (9%) had higher success rates than the students who met all prerequisites (67%). This was down from the 12% for Spring 1989.

---Nine of 34 counselors (26%) were at or above 60%, down from 32% for Spring 1989.

---Six of 34 counselors (18%) achieved a rate below 50%. This code has a greater number of low success rates than most other codes.

It is clear that a careful examination of some other reasons why a student may meet a prerequisite (not included in the computer's information files) can result in success rates higher than for students who meet all prerequisites. Counselors weight information differently. A low success rate can easily result when evaluating "other reasons" for meeting prerequisites.

SW code: The range of success for counselors using the SW code (student word that they had the equivalent of a prerequisite course elsewhere) was from 33% to 84%.

---Two counselors of 22 (9%) had success rates higher than the 67% rate of students who met prerequisites.

---Nine of 22 counselors (41%) were at or above 60%, down from 52% for Spring 1989.

---Six of 22 counselors (27%) using more than ten SW codes had a success rate below 50%, more than the 20% for Spring 1989.

A student's word was not particularly a good predictor of success in Spring 1988. For Fall 1988, however, there was a much more thoughtful application of this code by counselors, increasing

this success rate to an exceptional 60% overall. At 61% for Spring 1989, this code has been a surprisingly good one. Usage in Fall 1989 has slipped slightly, to 57%.

SI code: The range of success for counselors using the SI code was from 19% to 67%.

---No counselor using SI exceeded the 67% rate of students who met prerequisites.

---Four of 24 counselors (17%) had success rates at or above 60%.

---Fourteen of 20 counselors, or 58%, had success rates lower than 50%.

Overall Counselor Success Rates: The overall success rate of counselors who used more than 10 codes ranged from 47% to 95%. The collective success rate increased slightly, from 57% in Spring 1988 to 59% in Fall 1988, to 64% in Spring 1989, and down to 59% for Fall 1989.

---For seven of 46 counselors (15%), their overall success rate exceeded the 67% success rate of students who had met all prerequisites.

---Seventeen of 46 (37%) with more than ten codes were at or above 60% overall.

---Four of 46 (9%) had an overall success rate below 50%.

---The 95% was associated with very short term courses in which almost all students received A grades.

VI. SUMMARY

The Students Counselors Assess

How does counselor judgment as a means of assessment relate to student success? Counselors work with an infinite variety of information combinations, including test scores, previous college coursework in and outside of the district, previous degree status, high school grades, work experience, appearance, ability to articulate, vocabulary level, student's word about educational accomplishments, survey information, college grades, home situation, number of hours of work, personal support systems, perceived motivation, clarity of student goal, and so on. Every student brings a different configurations and combinations of the above kinds of information. Counselors are faced with the extraordinary task of taking each new combination of information, weighting the information, and making a unique judgment about the chances of success for each student. This judgment must then be combined with a discussion with the student to arrive at a decision about what to do. Student variables then get mixed with counselor judgment. This study looked at the success rate of this process in comparison to the success rate of all students in the district who met all course and basic skills prerequisites. Counselor judgment resulting in the use of override codes is often exercised in adverse circumstances, including off-campus sites, short appointment times, long lines, and inadequate information from the student.

Since this first report was done for Spring of 1988, counselors have had feedback on their performance on the use of codes. It was important to know whether or not feedback and experience could influence counselor success rates.

Codes Associated with High Success

Completing courses in a sequence, documented completion of previous coursework or degrees (SQ, PD, EC and ET), along with life experience, in related work areas and instructor evaluations (LX and IE), continued to be the best ways of predicting success. When these variables were analyzed by counselors and faculty, their success rates were:

	SP88	F88	SP89	F89
Sequence	N/A	68%	72%	73%
Instructor Evaluation	59%	61%	71%	66%
Existing Transcript	60%	60%	75%	65%
Previous Degree	59%	69%	64%	65%
Life Experience	67%	69%	60%	64%
Student's Word	51%	60%	61%	57%
Existing Coursework	60%	63%	60%	55%
Students Meeting Prerequisites	65%	65%	69%	67%

One of the most consistent (over four semesters) overall predictors of success in courses, 67%, was completion of course and basic skills prerequisites within the District. Basic skills prerequisites in this

study were met either by completion of basic skills courses or by an appropriate test score. Sixty-seven percent (67%) of these students were successful in Fall 1989.

The Use of Other Reasons (SO) in Meeting Prerequisites

When unique combinations of information had to be combined to establish some other reason that a student met a prerequisite (and, therefore, should be allowed in a class), the success rate for all counselors was:

Some Other Reason 55%

Success and Student Insistence (SI)

A student insistence (SI) code was used for the first time in Fall 1988 for students who insisted on taking a course above their prerequisite level. This group had one of the lowest success rates at 49%.

SI students had one of the highest withdrawal rate of any group, at 31%.

Overall Success of Counselors

The overall success of all counselors for all codes increased from 57% in Spring 1988 to 59% in Fall 1988, to 64% in Spring 1989, and decreased to 59% in Fall 1989. The reasons for the last semester decline are unclear at this time.

Competency of Counselor Decision Making

Again, counselor judgment is exercised along with student judgment and it is the result of this interchange that results in the override code given. It is evident that one cannot generalize about the effectiveness of counselor assessment. The judgment and counseling skills in relationship to students are exercised more effectively by some than others.

The complexity of the decision making dealing with an incredible range of variables in differing combinations for each student can never be encompassed effectively by a test or tests.

However, counselors who carefully follow prerequisites, use a careful evaluation of relevant life experience, and rely on documented evidence of previous coursework can achieve high levels of success at 60% or above.

All in all, there is great potential for the role of counselors in the assessment process and for feedback, coupled with practice, to increase success rates.

APPENDIX A

CONFIDENTIAL COUNSELOR FEEDBACK SHEET

GRADES X CODE - FALL 1989

ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges MAY 3 1 1990

COUNSELOR: (counselor initials here)
NO: (counselor # here)

	A'S		B'S		C'S		D'S		CR'S		F'S		W'S		I'S		NC'S		TOTAL		SP89 SUCC*		F89 SUCC*	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
EC:	6	12%	12	24%	4	8%	2	4%	7	14%	2	4%	13	27%	1	2%	2	4%	49	100%	51	64%	29	59%
EP:	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
ER:	2	40%	0	0%	1	20%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	40%	0	0%	0	0%	5	100%	0	0%	3	60%
ES:	1	8%	1	8%	3	25%	1	8%	1	8%	0	0%	5	42%	0	0%	0	0%	12	100%	15	38%	6	50%
ET:	20	12%	40	24%	36	21%	5	3%	11	7%	8	5%	40	24%	3	2%	5	3%	168	100%	152	68%	107	64%
IE:	5	12%	5	12%	6	15%	1	2%	5	12%	0	0%	11	27%	1	2%	7	17%	41	100%	39	65%	21	51%
LX:	22	24%	14	15%	14	15%	3	3%	11	12%	3	3%	20	22%	1	1%	5	5%	93	100%	88	55%	61	66%
OT:	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	6	100%	0	0%
PD:	12	28%	7	16%	3	7%	1	2%	6	14%	3	7%	10	23%	0	0%	1	2%	43	100%	43	63%	28	65%
SE:	1	6%	1	6%	1	6%	0	0%	5	29%	0	0%	8	47%	0	0%	1	6%	17	100%	2	40%	8	47%
SI:	3	8%	3	8%	6	15%	4	10%	7	18%	2	5%	13	33%	0	0%	2	5%	40	100%	8	26%	19	48%
SM:	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
SO:	27	11%	42	16%	41	16%	15	6%	39	15%	20	8%	54	21%	1	0%	16	6%	255	100%	76	47%	149	58%
SQ:	2	22%	2	22%	1	11%	0	0%	1	11%	0	0%	1	11%	0	0%	2	22%	9	100%	1	100%	6	67%
SW:	18	18%	17	17%	10	10%	5	5%	18	18%	9	9%	18	18%	1	1%	6	6%	102	100%	72	54%	63	62%
TOTALS WITH SI CODE:	119	14%	144	17%	126	15%	37	4%	111	13%	47	6%	195	23%	8	1%	47	6%	834	100%	553	57%	500	60%
TOTALS WITHOUT SI CODE:	116	15%	141	18%	120	15%	33	4%	104	13%	45	6%	182	23%	8	1%	45	6%	794	100%	545	58%	481	61%

*Succ = A + B + C + CR grades

Comments: Comments are based on codes when N > 10. Overall Success: At 60%, you have a success rate above the all counselor average of 59%. Increases of Note: ES 38-50%; LX 55-66%; SE 40-47%; SO 47-58%, SW 54-62% Decreases of Note: IE 65-51%; EC 64-59% Excellent Use: ET 64%; PD 65%; SW 62% Goal: Suggest increasing ES to 59% and reducing use of SE. Keep up the good work.